Australian Bureau of Statistics

6310.0 - Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia, Aug 1998

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Earnings growth slows, more causal workers and trade unions continue to lose members - ABS survey

Average weekly earnings increased by 2% in the year ending August 1998, compared to an average annual growth rate of 4% between August 1988 and August 1997, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Results from **Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia** show that average weekly earnings for full-time employees in their main job increased from $701 in August 1997 to $716 in August 1998 and for part-time employees from $260 to $270. Average weekly earnings in main job for males increased from $684 in August 1997 to $695 in August 1998 and for females from $450 to $465.

The number of employees in Australia increased from 7.0 million in August 1997 to 7.2 million in August 1998. Almost three quarters (5,213,500) of employees were full-time in their main job. The number of part-time employees increased by 6% from 1,916,400 in August 1997 to 2,031,300 in August 1998. Nearly three quarters (1,490,400) of part-time employees in August 1998 were female. Just over half (55%) of female employees and the majority (86%) of male employees worked full-time in their main job.

The proportion of casual employees continued to increase. From August 1997 to August 1998 this proportion rose from 26% to 27%.

There were 2,037,500 trade union members in August 1998, a decrease of 3% from August 1997. In August 1998, 28% of employees were trade union members (30% in August 1997). Almost one-third (30%) of male employees were members of a trade union, compared to 26% of females. A higher proportion of public sector employees (53%) reported trade union membership compared to private sector employees (21%).

In August 1998, 97% of the 5,213,500 full-time employees received one or more of the 'standard' employment benefits in their main job (superannuation, sick leave, holiday leave or long service leave).

Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia is the new title for the publication presenting data from the Survey of Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution). This is a household survey conducted as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey. Preliminary data released yesterday from the Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours are compiled from a survey of employers. Estimates from the two surveys are not directly comparable as there are important differences in the scope and methodology of the surveys.

Copies of the publication **Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 1998** (cat. no. 6310.0) are available from ABS Bookshops. Main features of the publication are available from this site.

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